

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
amy kimura	Individual	Oppose	No

I oppose HB 134. The Legislature and public were told this was a temporary surcharge that would expire when the rail was built. The surcharge is an extremely regressive tax.

Additional funding needed to build the rail should be collected from those who rent out their residences as short-term visitor accommodations, i.e., as hotels, as taxes and/or as fines..

The City can also raise property taxes. Although undesirable, it is preferable to extending the GET surcharge permanently.

Hawai'i Construction Alliance

P.O. Box 179441
Honolulu, HI 96817
(808) 348-8885

March 3, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
The Honorable Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair
and members
House Committee on Finance
Hawai'i State Legislature
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

RE: Strong Support for HB134

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members:

The Hawai'i Construction Alliance is comprised of the Hawai'i Regional Council of Carpenters; the Operative Plasterers' and Cement Masons' Union, Local 630; International Union of Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers, Local 1; the Laborers' International Union of North America, Local 368; and the Operating Engineers, Local Union No. 3. Together, the member unions of the Hawai'i Construction Alliance represent 15,000 working men and women in the basic crafts of Hawai'i's construction industry.

We are in strong support of HB134, relating to taxation, which makes permanent the county surcharge on state tax. Over the past several years, our unions have been strong advocates for the Honolulu Rapid Transit project, an important endeavor which will:

- Provide commuters with a fast, safe, and reliable alternative to driving in traffic congestion, eliminating tens of thousands of car trips that would otherwise be taken in private vehicles;
- Generate thousands of jobs in construction, engineering, and related fields, as well as additional indirect jobs in all sectors of our island's economy;
- Create the potential for transit-oriented development to take place in and around station areas, giving families the opportunity to affordably live, work, shop, and play closer to home; and
- Offer a more sustainable future for our island home through reduced CO2 emissions and less dependence on costly, imported oil.

We are proud of the remarkable work that our members have accomplished so far, including relocating utilities along the route, constructing facilities at the Rail Operations Center, drilling and pouring hundreds of shafts and columns, erecting balanced cantilever structures over the H-1 freeway, and casting and erecting numerous segments which comprise the westernmost portion of the guideway. We look forward to having even more members work on this historic project in the years ahead as it advances toward completion.

To ensure the successful completion of the project, to comply with the schedule and requirements set forth in the federal FFGA, and to assure that the benefits of rail can be fully realized for the people of Oahu, we respectfully request that your committees pass HB134, relating to taxation, which makes permanent the county surcharge on state tax.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tyler Dos Santos-Tam". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tyler" being the most prominent.

Tyler Dos Santos-Tam
Executive Director
Hawai'i Construction Alliance
execdir@hawaiiiconstructionalliance.org

FIN-Jo

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 2:39 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: cfrith@fbsmgt.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cynthia Frith	timeouthonolulu	Oppose	Yes

Comments: Strongly oppose as this is a regressive tax that hurts the poorest people of all.

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FIN-Jo

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 11:03 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: davidthompsonhawaii@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Thompson	Individual	Oppose	No

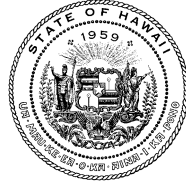
Comments: In lieu of the recent and predicted financial problems with Rail, I strongly oppose HB134

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DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

SHAN TSUTSUI
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION
P.O. BOX 259
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

MARIA E. ZIELINSKI
DIRECTOR OF TAXATION

To: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Finance

Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2015
Time: 3:00 P.M.
Place: Conference Room 308, State Capitol

From: Maria E. Zielinski, Director
Department of Taxation

Re: H.B. 134, Relating to Taxation

The Department of Taxation (Department) appreciates the intent of H.B. 134 and provides the following comments for your consideration.

H.B. 134 amends Act 247, Session Laws of Hawaii 2005 (Act 247), to eliminate the December 31, 2022 sunset date of the Act. Act 247 authorized each county to establish a surcharge on state tax at rates no greater than one-half percent of all gross proceeds and gross income taxable under chapter 237, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), General Excise Tax Law, and chapter 238, HRS, Use Tax Law, to fund public transportation systems in their respective counties. Act 247 required the surcharge to be established by county ordinance prior to December 31, 2005.

Act 247 also required the Department to levy, assess, and collect the county surcharge on State taxes. On August 10, 2005, the Honolulu City Council passed Ordinance 05-027 to establish the one-half percent surcharge to be collected by the Department beginning January 1, 2007. The Department notes that it is able to comply with a repeal of the Act 247 sunset date as proposed in this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



HAWAII LABORERS-EMPLOYERS COOPERATION AND EDUCATION TRUST
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 285 • Honolulu, HI 96817 • Phone: 808-845-3238 • Fax: 808-845-8300

**TESTIMONY OF HAWAII LECET
CLYDE T. HAYASHI - DIRECTOR**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2015

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Wednesday, March 4, 2015
TIME: 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: Conference Room 308
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 134, RELATING TO TAXATION.

TO THE HONORABLE SYLVIA LUKE, FIN CHAIR, SCOTT NISHIMOTO, FIN VICE CHAIR; AND MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

My name is Clyde T. Hayashi, and I am the Director of Hawaii LECET. Hawaii LECET is a labor-management partnership between the Hawaii Laborers Union, Local 368, and its unionized contractors.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of House Bill No. 134, which makes permanent the county surcharge on state tax.

HB 134 does not approve making the City and County of Honolulu .5% GET tax permanent, it allows the City and County of Honolulu to make that decision.

The Honolulu Rail Project's projected budget shows that the project will cost \$550 million to \$700 million more than originally projected. If the 5307 funds are excluded, then the shortfall is \$910 million. At this point, the only option to allow the Rail Project to be completed is to extend the collection of the county surcharge.

If this is not approved and if there are no other options, it is very likely that the Rail Project will be killed. That would be terrible for the residents of the City and County of Honolulu. It will eliminate the best solution to our massive traffic problems and it will erase all positive plans to build TOD (transit oriented development), to build affordable housing, and to help to develop the future Honolulu into a modern, sustainable city. It will also be disastrous to the construction industry and to our contractors and members.

For these reasons, we **strongly support** House Bill No. 134, and humbly ask that it passes this committee.

FIN-Jo

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 2:40 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: michelematsuo@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
michele matsuo	Time out honolulu	Oppose	Yes

Comments: Dear Madam Chair and members of the committee , Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I strongly oppose HB 134. The Tax Foundation calculated the taxes paid by each person including children as a result of the Rail surcharge and it is \$200 per person, Per year. This bill would change the amount that oahu taxpayers agreed to pay for Rail dramtically. instead of taxing Oahu taxpayers for just 16 or 17 years, x \$200, or \$3200-3400 each, you would impose with HB 134 a tax on our young people of potentially \$180,000 each if they live 90 years more, before adjusting for inflation. For a very iffy antiquated technology transit system which has failed to account for the funds received? It is time to take a timeout on Rail until we know the cost of the project, how the surcharge monies have been spent, be sure that our cultural properties are not being destroyed by TOD, that our precious Pearl Harbor Aquifer is not being damage by drilling in the caprock, know what the traffic relief is going to be since Prsons .Brinkerhoff in the City's own FINAL EIS says that there will be no traffic relief, and determine that we are going to be able to pay for Operations and Maintenance. The DC Metrorail system maintained by Ansaldo is doing so poorly that ridership is declining (11% down) and 3 times in the last week it smoked out riders from its stations, and of course killed a person with metrotrain smoke this year. Please vote No on HB 134! Thank you ! Respectfully submitted, Michele Matsuo

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FIN-Jo

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Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 10:46 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: 1mu630@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ricky Tamashiro	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Local #1 SUPPORTS HB134 so that the construction can keep on going and keep everyone working for now and for the future expansion. Local #1 represents members from the following trades, Brick and Block Setters, Ceramic and Marble Setters, Stone Masons, and Pointer Caulkers we ask for your support for HB134 and any bill in relation to the Rail tax that will keep us working Mahalo

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FIN-Jo

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 11:09 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: robert.retherford@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ursua Retherford	Individual	Oppose	Yes

Comments: This is a test to see if I get the system work. I have been having difficulties.

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Testimony of WOEDA in Support of HB 134

To: House Finance Committee

Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Time: 3:00 PM

Place: Conference Room 308 - State Capitol

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am Kristi Hirota-Schmidt, representing the members of the West Oahu Economic Development Association, also known as WOEDA, and testifying in support of HB 134, which extends the general excise tax surcharge to complete the rail project.

Our association is made up of business, community and government leaders dedicated to supporting the economic growth of West Oahu. Our area is the fastest growing population and business base in the state, with the number of businesses here doubling in the past 10 years and many more expected in the future as Kapolei builds out.

For business, time is money. Traffic congestion adds unnecessarily to the cost of doing business. Many of us, our employees and our customers have to travel regularly between downtown Honolulu and Kapolei. Delays due to traffic are more often the norm rather than the exception.

WOEDA believes that the rail project is vital to the success and well being of the “new city” of Kapolei. We strongly support the rail project because it will reduce future traffic congestion, make it easier to travel between town and West Oahu and improve the business climate of our island.

Rail construction is already underway in West Oahu, and HART needs to complete construction and finish the rail project. We are concerned that any delay would only cost the public much more money in the end.

For these reasons, we request your approval of HB 134.

Thank you for allowing me to provide you with our testimony.

Respectfully on behalf of WOEDA,



Kristi Hirota-Schmidt
President

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, February 28, 2015 4:15 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: anthony_orozco@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 2/28/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anthony Orozco	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Lower taxes now!

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TESTIMONY BY WESLEY K. MACHIDA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 134

March 4, 2015

RELATING TO TAXATION

House Bill No. 134 extends the half percent county surcharge on state tax for the City and County of Honolulu's (C&CH) rail project permanently.

The Department of Budget and Finance would like to inform the Committee that the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) has provided us with written responses to the questions (see attached testimony) that we raised about the financial aspects of the rail project during the February 12th hearing on a similar bill (S.B. No. 19) before the Senate Committees on Transportation and Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs. We also met with the HART's financial staff to discuss the written responses.

It is our understanding that the HART has provided, or will be providing shortly, copies of this information to the Committee. We believe that the information will be particularly helpful to the Legislature in making an informed decision on extending the half percent county surcharge.

We are willing to assist the Committee in reviewing and analyzing the information provided by the HART.

Attachment

TESTIMONY BY WESLEY K. MACHIDA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY,
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 19

February 12, 2015

RELATING TO TAXATION

Senate Bill No. 19 makes permanent the half percent county surcharge on State tax for the City and County of Honolulu's (C&CH) rail project.

The Department of Budget and Finance has serious reservations about making the half percent county surcharge permanent based on the information available to date. In order to make an informed decision on any type of extension, we strongly believe that the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) and City Administration need to provide the Legislature, Governor and taxpayers of the C&CH with, at a minimum, the following information:

- Updated cost projections for all aspects of the rail project's construction and development (i.e., land and right-of-way acquisition, design and project management, construction, equipment, etc.) based on current economic conditions, and identification and explanation of differences greater than \$5.0 million in the updated construction and development cost projections versus the baseline cost projections that were in place when construction contracts were first awarded.
- Updated cost projections for all aspects of the rail's operations and maintenance (i.e., administration, staffing, utilities, maintenance and repairs, etc.) using appropriate inflation indices to adjust costs to the time period

when the rail will be operational, and identification and explanation of differences greater than \$5.0 million in the updated operations and maintenance cost projections versus the baseline cost projections that were in place when construction contracts were first awarded.

- Updated revenue estimates for all revenue sources for the rail project (i.e., the half percent county surcharge on State tax, federal funds, developer assessments, rider fees, etc.), and identification and explanation of differences greater than \$5.0 million in the updated revenue estimates versus the baseline revenue estimates that were in place when construction contracts were first awarded.
- A detailed accounting of all expenditures and revenues for the rail project from January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2014, and a detailed accounting of all outstanding contract commitments as of December 31, 2014.
- An updated financial plan for the rail project and future rail operations that reflects updated annual revenues and expenditures, annual surpluses (deficits), and ending balances on a cash basis for the period from fiscal year 2013-14 to fiscal year 2033-34.
 - Included in the financial plan should be the amounts necessary each fiscal year to keep the rail project progressing and operating along with an explanation of the financial plan's underlying assumptions.
 - Two financial plan scenarios should be presented:
 - One with the half percent county surcharge sun-setting on December 31, 2022; and
 - Another with the half percent county surcharge sun-setting on December 31, 2027.

- Any proposed bond financing plans with details on size of issue(s), structure and terms, projected interest rates, debt service schedules, repayment pledges, etc.
- Actions being taken or planned to minimize actual and/or anticipated cost overruns.
- Alternative, non-State revenue sources being proposed, including additional funding from the C&CH's sources of revenues, and if no non-State revenue sources are being proposed, an explanation of the reason(s) for not pursuing non-State funding.

Until this information is provided, consideration of any extension of the half percent county surcharge would be premature.

We should not extend the transit tax

by Dennis Callan

Rail has failed nearly every test. The city's dramatic confession that they are at least \$700 million short of funds to build rail is yet another reason to halt this project now before it is really too late and we plunge over the fiscal cliff. We need a moratorium on further construction of rail to provide a chance to re-evaluate the possibilities.

It is not too late to convert this project to something useful, such as elevated lanes for express bus, carpool and maybe tolls to help pay for it (user pays). They are called HOT Lanes and are growing in popularity nationwide. Let's temporarily put a stop to the rail construction, step back, take a breath and investigate.

Hawaii already takes more sales taxes from our low-income residents than any other state and now the government wants to make this disgraceful situation worse. The numbers: Hawaii's poorest 20% pay 11% of their income in excise taxes which represents 80% of their total tax bill, highest in the nation. Compare this to our richest 20% who spend just 2% of their income as excise taxes. We all know that sales taxes are extremely regressive, and this is doubly painful here with the nation's highest cost of living. Hawaii's extremely unfair tax system is a product of the state legislature, so they should be trying to fix it instead of making it worse.

Hawaii has a huge excise tax already, ranking in the nation's top-seven states for reliance on revenue from sales and excise taxes – and all but two of those top-seven exempt food and drugs. We are the worst. The average state collects 34% of its revenue from sales tax while Hawaii collects 49%.

It's not just the lower incomes that feel pressures from our cost of living and strained economy. We are in the bottom-five states for disposable income, and are ranked towards the bottom by many standards of economic well-being -- we've heard the story too many times before, and now they want to make it worse.

Consider this thought experiment: If the richest fifth of our population paid out the same 10% of their income as excise taxes, the state would collect an extra \$1.9 billion annually, solving all of our budget problems. While it is unlikely the state will start collecting this equal share from the wealthy any time soon, the scenario is offered to dramatize how large a burden the poor are paying for rail. (These figures are derived from Census data showing total annual Hawaii income of \$42 billion, with the top fifth getting 46% or \$19 billion, yielding \$1.9 billion if 10% were paid out as excise tax.)

Finances are just one of many problems with rail, which has been sold to the public with a bag of lies about traffic reduction, job creation, ridership, TOD, citizen

participation, on-time, on-budget, etc. None of these promises are likely to happen in any significant way.

Look at the folly of rail, spending over \$6 billion on a transit project that will do practically nothing to help our severe traffic congestion. The city's own EIS numbers show that transit ridership, currently at 5% of trips, will only go up to 7% of trips with rail and bus. Congestion on H1 will increase 30% in the coming decade with rail, according to the EIS, condemning those Leeward drivers to permanent traffic hell. At the same time, less-expensive more effective alternatives are available, using managed lanes and bus rapid transit. We have already collected enough GET to pay for most of that option, and don't need any more taxes. This alternative was never properly examined by Mufi Hanneman's disgraced administration. Rapidly-evolving use of driverless vehicles and ride-sharing apps will add many more enhanced options rather than relying on 19th-century train technology.

Another folly connected with rail is the dream of TOD, concentrated development near stations, which is very unlikely to happen with any significance considering the lack of adjacent developable land and vague city plans, which have no enforcement teeth. If any new high-density housing does go up it will probably follow the pattern we see lately producing a majority of very expensive units. In that case the poor would pay for rail and the rich will ride.

The most recent failure of this TOD theory is found at the proposed Ho'opili project near Kapolei, which would have 2 rail stations, each with about 130 acres within the $\frac{1}{4}$ mile radius, supposedly ideal for TOD walk-to-the-station housing. Do the math: 260 acres of open land available for TOD densities and what do the developers propose? Only 40 acres designated for high density!

The rest of their 12,000-home project is for profitable, expensive housing, slap-it-up wooden MacMansions and townhouses at low and medium density, too far from stations to attract riders. This was the acid test for TOD and they have failed, even though their outrageous proposal to urbanize Oahu's best farmlands was unanimously approved by the City's developer-packed Planning Commission and is heading for likely approval at our rubber-stamp City Council. TOD plans for the other 19 stations are vague and lack any enforcement.

Regarding "lost" federal funding, how does \$1.5 billion help us when we are already looking at more than a \$2 billion cost overrun (for a useless system)? The city administration and HART have been very secretive about what has been spent so far and what to expect when new bids are opened for future construction, but already the cost is about double what was promised by Mufi Hanneman years ago. Now Caldwell wants a blank check, no questions asked, for an unlimited time into the future, paid for with money from our poorest residents.

Cancel the project before it gets worse, give back the money, develop the less-expensive, more-effective alternative, then ask the feds for renewed support. It can

be done. There is much more federal money available for roads and buses than for rail. We need to pull the plug on this elevated monster right now and take a time out to seriously examine the finances and to have an honest discussion about alternatives.

In their defense the city trots out old lies about BRT (bus rapid transit) claiming an elevated structure for bus would require too many on-ramps, which is not true, and arguing that Federal funds would not be available for bus. Well, let's find out by asking the Federal Transportation Authority about transferring money. Some claim the transfer would be easy and might include a bonus for bus purchase.

Public opinion has never been strong for rail, despite several dubious elections manipulated by big money and slanderous lies that seemed to give this train a green light. The public is fed up and getting increasingly disgusted.

This tax extension request before you is a perfect opportunity for the legislature to say no thanks, we are done with rail, let's look at a better alternative. Deny the extension. Halt construction now. Enough already, we don't need or want this absurd rail project.

<http://www.itep.org/whopays/states/hawaii.php>

<http://taxfoundation.org/article/sources-state-and-local-tax-revenues>

<http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/Hawaii.aspx>

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 2:36 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: ramelbb001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ben Ramelb	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: The mayor and governor should take a TIMEOUT. HART must reveal the total rail cost before the 0.5% GET is extended by the state or bonds are issued by the city council. The rail cost could rise from \$6 Billion to \$15 to \$20 billion or \$1 Billion per mile. See cost projection for Oahu rail by LaVonda Atkinson, a program cost control analyst for 20 years (last 8 minutes of video). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsC-EPJLNF8&feature=youtu.be> Until the governor and city council decide to Continue or to Scrap rail, some elements of the rail construction should be delayed. Otherwise, Grabauski will say that it was foolish to build structures that could be torn down if the decision is made to scrap rail because of high cost (\$15 to \$20 Billion) of rail. Delay construction of the rail track, rail stations, no train and car purchases, power plant, rail maintenance yard, and land acquisition.

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I am a resident of Ewa Beach and urge the House to pass HB 134 and HB 320, the extension of the GE Rail Tax.

The rail transit project is critical to our island's future. Right now whenever we want to go somewhere, we have to plan everything around the traffic on our highways and freeways. It is getting to be a smaller window every year. Traffic gridlock is a way of life on our island. Neighborhoods are so choked with cars that it's becoming impossible to park your car when you get home after work or get an ambulance in to take care of you when you have an emergency. Why in the world would we want more of the same for our future. I want something better for our families and for our businesses. It is not going to get better without changing to a different way to get us to our destinations.

The rail transit project offers us a way to plan future development so that it takes advantage of rail hubs or stations to provide transportation rather than adding more cars to already crowded neighborhoods. It offers a way to preserve and protect our island from the onslaught of more and more cars and constantly worsening traffic. And it benefits everyone, not just the people who live in areas serviced by the rail transit system. By taking traffic off our highways, the people who still use their cars to commute from other neighborhoods will find the drive much easier. Trucks that supply our businesses will find it much easier to deliver their goods.

No one on our island seems to like change but sometimes change brings real improvement to our lives. If the rail's contracts for new stations are coming in higher than they originally estimated, think about the reason for it. It's not that our rail management team is incompetent, it is because our economy is doing well for a change, after years of declining land and home prices and salary cuts or layoffs. With economic growth comes higher prices and that will affect the cost of the rail contracts. But, let's be honest, our economic growth isn't a bad thing! Don't abandon the most important improvement for our island since building roads from Honolulu to Kaneohe, or constructing the reef runways. Stick with it and support the rail transit system. We will all benefit and you will feel the satisfaction of knowing that you did something really important to our future.

With respect, -Bruce Bonbright

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 7:28 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: kiragirl02@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM*

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Calvin Nakamura	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 9:37 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: bebekalola@aol.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM*

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carol Viquelia	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

KIRK CALDWELL
MAYOR

530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 300 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-4141 • FAX: (808) 768-4242 • INTERNET: www.honolulu.gov

ROY K. AMEMIYA, JR.
MANAGING DIRECTOR
DESIGNATE

GEORGETTE T. DEEMER
DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR



March 3, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Finance
State House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 308
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Representative Luke and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: Testimony on House Bill No. 134 Relating to Taxation

I appreciate this opportunity to file testimony in support of House Bill No. 134.

Over the last two years, as Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, I have worked with my City team and the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) to construct a robust multi-modal transportation system that will provide travel options to Oahu's residents and visitors alike, particularly those who live, work, attend school and pass through Oahu's most densely congested leeward urban corridor.

In 1977, the Oahu General Plan designated the Ewa region as the location for a secondary urban center to be developed around a community known as Kapolei. Originally thousands of acres of barren land, today's Kapolei is a thriving and growing community of nearly 40,000, with more than 800 businesses employing over 27,000 local residents.

The success of our plan to grow the Ewa region, build affordable homes and create jobs is evident today in the surface motor vehicle traffic which not only negatively impacts Kapolei, but families, businesses and communities outside Kapolei and beyond.

Building rail was a commitment to these local families, businesses and communities to provide faster, reliable and affordable public transportation options as

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Finance
March 3, 2015
Page 2

an alternative to private automobile travel on congested surface roadways. The City likewise committed to plan, design and build transit-enhanced neighborhoods, where families, including seniors and those dependent on affordable public transportation, could age-in-place in dense neighborhoods without the need for a car. This commitment prioritized development along the rail line while respecting the wishes of those who wanted to "keep the country country."

We also made mutual commitments with our construction industry and unions, asking them to step-up and provide local skilled laborers in return for our promise to build rail and communities around rail, jobs that will be lost should we retreat on our commitments.

Traffic congestion on Oahu is at unacceptable levels. Building less than the twenty (20) mile twenty-one (21) station fixed guideway minimal operating segment (MOS), or worse, underfunding rail and forcing the cancellation of the project in whole, abdicates on the many commitments collectively made to the people of this great island. As Mayor, that is not my nature and I will continue to ask that we stand firm to our vision for a robust multi-modal transportation system on Oahu.

Building the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) by extending multi-modal transportation options to U.H. Manoa and Kapolei would be an even better solution. It adds new value to an extension of the GET and links Oahu's second city to the flagship campus of our University of Hawaii system.

As Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, we are committed to the rail project. We are building transit-enhanced neighborhoods with the necessary infrastructure to accommodate all modes of travel connecting with rail (pedestrian, bike, bus/handivan and motor vehicle). We are developing electronic fare media which will allow transit riders to make seamless connections between bus and rail using a common fare card (smart card). And we are committed to studying value capture mechanisms through the appointment of a task force to consider all options and an implementation time frame.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kirk Caldwell", with a stylized, wavy line extending from the end.

Kirk Caldwell
Mayor

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 8:38 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: hawaiiour@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/1/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
david hardy	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Rail will bankrupt the City of Honolulu, with no appreciable benefit. Stop Rail Now.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 9:52 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: dawnshimabukuro@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dawn Shimabukuro	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: If this tax is extended it just proves that the rail project is full of false promises. This tax should sunset when we were told it would. The city is asking for a blank check. Passing this will just give HART absolutely no incentive to save money. Lastly, since this project has been changed so dramatically that the vote is null. We need to reevaluate whether this project should continue.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 10:16 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: ramelbb001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ben Ramelb	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Mayor Caldwell constantly and deceptively, states that Rail is an "alternative", (a Billionaire's alternative!) that could cost \$15 to \$20 Billion and worsen H-1 traffic gridlock. See \$1 Billion cost per elevated rail mile <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsC-EPJLNF8&feature=youtu.be> We taxpayers need a "Middle Class" alternative for under \$2 Billion which will eliminate H-1 gridlock in West Oahu. The city can return the Fed funds and salvage the rail guideway by converting to 3-lane non-toll freeway from Kapolei to downtown Hotel/King/Beretania to transport 20,000 commuters per hour (7 times more commuters than rail) for under \$2.0 Billion, collected by the 0.5% GET. The reversible freeway will eliminate the H-1 gridlock well beyond year 2035

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TO: Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

HEARING: Wednesday March 4, 2015
3 PM
Conference Room 308

FROM: Derek Hoffmann

RE: HB 134 - RELATING TO TAXATION

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Derek Hoffmann and I strongly oppose HB 134.

I wish to express my concern as a lifelong resident of this state and the on going saga that is the Rail. I feel that the Mayor, Hart and some city council members were and still are being dishonest in representing facts and the true costs for this Rail project.

I kept hearing "On time and On budget" and it turned out those were all LIES or maybe they did not know the true cost of Rail or that the tax increase was never to be temporary or once they started no one would want to stop it? I say stop the Rail and stop taxing the residents into poverty.

This has been a very dishonest way to push rail forward and with another Huge price increase first from 3.2 billion all the way to UH, then almost double to 5.2 million and now only to the upscale shopping mall and now over 6 billion+ with no one knowing the final cost of this poorly planned project?

Its unacceptable and absurd no one buys anything with out knowing the final cost. Please be responsible with the taxpayer's monies and oppose bill HB 134.

Mahalo, for this opportunity to testify and I Strongly Oppose HB 134.

March 2, 2015

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, and Members
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Rev. Bob Nakata, Co-Chair, FACE Housing Task Force

HEARING: Testimony on HB134
Wednesday, March 4, 2015, 3:00 p.m.

Chair Luke and members of the Finance Committee: Thank you for this opportunity to speak in strong support of HB134 relating to taxation. Faith Action for Community Equity (FACE) is a twenty-year old, faith-based community advocacy organization. It is interfaith with about 25 churches, temples, and synagogues and a mix of other groups. It addresses issues of those without a voice in the public arena.

Housing and homelessness have been core issues of FACE throughout its history and particularly now, in light of the dire crisis in both of these issues.

It is for this reason that FACE has been a strong proponent of Honolulu's mass transit system in the urban core of the City. It is necessary to have higher density to bring housing costs down, and higher density requires mass transit to be able to move about. We have supported mass transit and transit-oriented development in order to have affordable housing, not the other way around. This is why we support HB134, to extend the life of the GET 0.5 percent surtax to pay for the transit system and urge you to support it. Without it, many of our residents will be forced to move out of state, and some to join the ranks of those dying on our streets.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2015

TESTIMONY to

House Committee on Finance

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

Members: Romy M. Cachola, Ty J.K. Cullen, Lynn DeCoite, Aaron Ling Johanson, Jo Jordon, Jarrett Keohokalole, Bertrand Kobayashi, Nicole E. Lowen, Gene Ward
Richard H. K. Onishi, James Kunane Tokioka, Kyle T. Yamashita, Feki Pouha,

HB 134 RELATING TO TAXATION.

Wednesday, March 4, 2015 3:00 PM - State Capitol Conference Room 308

Submitted in **OPPOSITION** by: Fern Mossman, HI 96734 HD 50

I agree with the following article. Please stop this boondoggle.

After eight years, the rail project is failing.

With only two miles and no stations constructed, and having chosen one of the most remote and least reliable train manufacturers - Ansaldo, we are now told that the remaining available funds are insufficient to finish the rail project.

The city wants taxpayers to come up with the additional billions that would be required to finish rail. The only question is whether to extend the excise tax surcharge, which is already costing a typical family \$800 per year, or raise property taxes.

In light of the above, Council members and Legislators need to take a timeout and take a hard look at where we are and how we got here.

Accordingly, we are asking our elected representatives to demand accountability and transparency on the following topics before considering any further taxes or loans.

1. Let's see an annual audit of all rail moneys spent thus far starting in 2007 through 2014.
2. Let's see contractor bids on the remaining 10 miles of the project so we know the price of the project in 2015 dollars.
3. Let's see a clear statement of facts about the project's projected impact on the current level of traffic congestion.
4. Let's see a clear statement of exactly how the city will force thousands of bus riders daily to transfer to rail. Let's be clear on the number of new residents needed in the TOD areas to meet the current projected rail ridership.
5. Let's see a clear-headed analysis of less expensive viable alternatives, such as bus rapid transit on managed lanes.

Please vote NO on HB 134

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 12:39 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: fccadizpal@aol.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM*

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
fred	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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March 4, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair

House Committee on Finance
State Capitol, Room 308
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: H.B. 134, Relating to Taxation

HEARING: Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 3:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee:

I am Myoung Oh, Government Affairs Director, here to testify on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, and its 8,400 members. HAR **strongly opposes** H.B. 134, which allows the counties to adopt a county surcharge on the General Excise Tax (GET).

HAR believes that, in the current economic environment, businesses and residents are particularly sensitive to additional financial burdens, and economic conditions continue to pose daunting challenges into the foreseeable future. An additional county surcharge increase in the GET will be especially burdensome for low-income families, who have the least ability to afford a new tax that would apply so broadly to a family's basic needs such as food, medicine, and clothing. Increasing the tax burden will do nothing to stimulate the economy and restore our economic vitality.

While the GET rate may seem low relative to the sales tax rate assessed in other states and municipalities, studies have shown that, with the pyramiding effect, the effective rate is considerably higher. A 0.5% increase, equivalent to a 12.5% increase in the tax rate, raises the stated rate to 4.5% (county surcharge from 4.0% to 4.5%), but increases the effective rate even more drastically.

Consumers can ill afford this tax increase at this time. **The GET in Hawaii is applied to 160 of 168 good and services, the most of any state in the nation.** Our citizens cannot afford a 12.5% increase in their general excise tax burden, when they are struggling today to afford other necessities.

HAR also notes that studies reveal that Hawaii's population is aging and, in fact, we rank 12th among all states in the percentage of population ages 65 and over. We all know that the demographic shift towards an older population will accelerate in the years to come. Our senior citizens have worked hard all their lives and now rely on their retirement incomes to survive the ever increasing cost of living in Hawaii. These seniors cannot afford to have their fixed retirement incomes reduced by a tax on those incomes.

While raising the GET is the most effective means of increasing revenues for the Counties, we first should look towards reducing the expenses before we look to raise the revenues to match the expenses. We just cannot continue to place the burden of rising costs on already overtaxed citizens.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong opposition to this measure.



IN REPLY REFER TO:
CMS-AP00-01124

HONOLULU AUTHORITY for RAPID TRANSPORTATION

Daniel A. Grabauskas
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO

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Carrie K.S. Okinaga, Esq.

Statement of
IVAN LUI-KWAN
Chair of the Board of Directors of the
Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation
before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 4, 2015
3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HB 134
RELATING TO TAXATION

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

The Board of Directors of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) supports House Bill 134, which makes permanent the county surcharge on state tax.

The HART Board of Directors favors and supports legislative measures which seek to increase the amount of the county surcharge on state tax revenues that will be paid to the City and County of Honolulu for HART to construct the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

Please find attached Resolution 2015-3 stating the HART Board of Directors' position.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony.

Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-3

REGARDING THE POSITION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE HONOLULU AUTHORITY FOR RAPID TRANSPORTATION ON THE COUNTY TAX SURCHARGE PROCEEDS COLLECTED BY THE STATE OF HAWAII FOR THE HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) has been established pursuant to Article XVII of the Revised Charter of the City and County of Honolulu 1973, as amended; and

WHEREAS, with the enactment of Act 247, Hawaii Session Laws 2005, the Hawaii State Legislature authorized the City and County of Honolulu to levy a surcharge of one-half percent on the state general excise and use taxes by ordinance to fund operating or capital costs of a locally preferred alternative (LPA) for a mass transit project, and expenses in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 with respect to such project; and

WHEREAS, on August 10, 2005, the Honolulu City Council passed Ordinance 05-027 which established the one-half percent surcharge to be collected by the State beginning January 1, 2007; and

WHEREAS, through the approval of Ordinance 07-001, the Honolulu City Council selected a fixed guideway system as the LPA for the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project (now known as the Honolulu Rail Transit Project or H RTP); and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 07-001 requires that the LPA be financed only by general excise and use tax surcharge revenues, interest earned on the revenues, and any federal, state, or private revenues; and

WHEREAS, during the Twenty-Eighth State Legislature (2015-2016), there will be various legislative measures introduced and discussed relating to the county surcharge on state general excise tax; and


WHEREAS, in order to meet current and future financial needs of the H RTP, assurance of additional county surcharge amounts for building the H RTP will enhance HART's ability to avoid using funds from the Federal Transit Administration's Urbanized Area Formula Program (49 U.S.C. §5307), and without adversely impacting the city and county of Honolulu's fiscal status;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of HART as follows:

1. The HART Board of Directors favors and supports legislative measures which seek to increase the amount that will be paid to the City for HART of the county surcharge on state tax revenues to construct the H RTP; and

2. The HART Executive Director and CEO is authorized to submit testimony on pertinent legislation consistent with the overall policies set forth herein; and
3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED by the Board of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation on
JAN 29 2015.


Board Chair

ATTEST:


Board Administrator



IN REPLY REFER TO:
CMS-AP00-01119

HONOLULU AUTHORITY for RAPID TRANSPORTATION

Daniel A. Grabauskas
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Damien T.K. Kim
Carrie K.S. Okinaga, Esq.

Statement of
DANIEL A. GRABAUSKAS
Executive Director and CEO, Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation
before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 4, 2015
3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HB 134
RELATING TO TAXATION

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

The Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART) supports House Bill 134, which makes permanent the county surcharge on state tax.

HART believes eliminating or extending the general excise tax (GET) sunset date of December 31, 2022, is the best option to meet multiple goals. These goals are: (1) to eliminate the current projected deficit; (2) start immediate plans for extensions to the University of Hawaii at Manoa and downtown Kapolei; and (3) create an equitable source of operating subsidy, one-third of which is paid for by visitors to our island.

The Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) provided the City and County of Honolulu (City) with \$1.55 billion in Federal New Starts funding. The FFGA also states the City has an obligation to complete this project under the time frame specified in the agreement (20 miles, 21 stations, 80 rail vehicles) regardless of any financial challenges the City might encounter. If the City defaults on this agreement, then the City could face even greater fiscal challenges, including repayment of these Federal funds.

HART's major contracts must be advertised by the end of this year and awarded by mid-2016 to stay on schedule. Staying on schedule is critical to prevent costly delays and to comply with the terms of the FFGA. According to State law, Hawaii Revised Statutes Section 103D-309 and Hawaii Administrative Rules Section 3-122-102, pertaining to HART's contracts, the City must have funding in place before HART can award contracts to complete the project. No contracts can be awarded without funding in place.

In addition, Honolulu's construction costs are among the highest in the nation, and rising. HART has consulted with a wide spectrum of the construction industry, including experts who track construction prices across the country as well as here in Hawaii. All projections lead us to believe that construction costs are expected to increase 12% to 15% each year over the next two years. Pushing the project schedule back will mean higher bids and higher costs. For example, on a billion-dollar contract, with these projections, simply waiting a year will cost our taxpayers more than \$120 million to \$150 million with no benefit. Time is money and this is particularly true in the construction field.

Based upon the legal necessity to have funding in place in order to sign contracts, coupled with rapidly rising market costs that are beyond our control, we believe eliminating or extending the sunset on the GET now is the best course of action.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony.



HAWAII OPERATING ENGINEERS INDUSTRY STABILIZATION FUND



*Uniting our strengths and working together
for a better tomorrow.*

Affiliated AFL-CIO
OPEIU - 8 - AFL-CIO (8)

March 2, 2015

Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
And Members of the Committee on Finance
415 South Beretania Street, Room 306
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Comments on HB 134 – Relating to Taxation

Chair Luke and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kimberly Ribellia, Government Liaison, of the Hawaii Operating Engineers Industry Stabilization Fund (HOEISF), a labor management fund representing 4000 unionized members in heavy engineering site work and 500 general contractors specializing in heavy site and vertical construction.

HOEISF supports HB 134 which makes permanent the county surcharge on state tax.

HOEISF supports the extension of the county surcharge on state tax which will allow the Honolulu Authority on Rapid Transit to complete the current 20-mile segment of the mass transit system. The permanent funding from the county surcharge will also provide the opportunity to move forward with extension of the transit system to the University of Hawaii at Manoa campus and to Kapolei.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kimberly Ribellia'.

Kimberly Ribellia
Government Liaison
HOEISF



HAWAII REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

March 3, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair,
The Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Statement of the Hawaii Regional Council of Carpenters on HB 134 Relating to Taxation

Wednesday, March 4, 2015
3:00 p.m., Room 308, State Capitol

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the committee,

The Hawaii Regional Council of Carpenters represents 6,000 union carpenters and drywall installers in the state. We **support** HB 134 to make the county surcharge on state tax permanent.

The City and County of Honolulu utilizes this provision to fund the Honolulu Rail Transit project. This source of revenue is needed to finance the ongoing rail project, bring in allocated federal funds, and operate the system. This revenue will also create a funding source for approvals and further federal funding for rail extensions to the University of Hawaii at Manoa and downtown Kapolei, allowing rail development to continue without risk of a costly construction halt and restart.

To date, \$1.3 billion has been spent building the rail project. Construction crews have completed more than two miles of the guideway, and construction on the Rail Operations Center is more than 60 percent complete. With 60 percent of the project's construction contracts awarded and over 1,300 people currently employed through rail-related jobs, we need leadership to see this through.

Right now, three factors have come together to create a new fiscal reality for the rail project—the cost of legal and construction delays, a trend in lower general excise tax (GET) surcharge revenue, and the rising cost of construction. This means the rail project is facing a projected deficit of up to \$910 million. Although recent high bids have come in during an upswing in the construction market, conditions in the years ahead cannot be precisely predicted, and we should not waver with each economic shift. A project of this magnitude will serve us well, despite changing economic trends.

While the cost of the rail system is a serious matter, we must keep in mind that half of the rail transit project is being paid for with the 0.5 percent county surcharge on GET. The combination of \$1.55 billion in federal funds with the GET system, which collects a third of its revenue through visitor spending, makes this project both feasible and beneficial.

Thank you for considering our comments in **strongly supporting** HB 134.

STATE HEADQUARTERS & BUSINESS OFFICES

OAHU: 1311 Houghtailing Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817-2712 • Ph. (808) 847-5761 Fax (808) 841-0300

HILO OFFICE: 525 Kilauea Avenue, Room 205, Hilo, Hawaii 96720-3050 • Ph. (808) 935-8575 Fax (808) 935-8576

KONA OFFICE: 75-126 Lunapule Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96740-2106 • Ph. (808) 329-7355 Fax (808) 326-9376

MAUI OFFICE: 330 Hookahi Street, Wailuku, Maui 96793-1449 • Ph. (808) 242-6891 Fax (808) 242-5961

KAUAI OFFICE: Kuhio Medical Ctr. Bldg., 3-3295 Kuhio Hwy., Suite 201, Lihue, Kauai 96766-1040 • Ph. (808) 245-8511 Fax (808) 245-8911

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 3:12 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: jnscott62@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/1/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jackie Scott	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: We are being taxed to death and now you want more. and for what. A rail that the mayor himself, has said will not relieve traffic congestion. I heard him! Do you honestly think the people would have voted for this rail if the city had been honest from the beginning? Mufi lied through his teeth with the city paying for it.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 11:46 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: drjlam@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/1/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
jerry lam	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: i stand strongly against extending the surcharge. the public does not wan the rail project. it will not help lower traffic congestion. it will bakrupt us and it will take money away from sorely needed public projects. please do not pass this measure!!!

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 10:47 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: info.mustard.seed.faith@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jim Anderson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Dear Hawaii State Legislators: I was born and raised in this beautiful state. I strongly oppose the building of this mass rail transit. It is going to cost us tax payers way too much and the sad part is that it is not going to solve our traffic problems. This is not Tokyo where they have over 13 million people in that small area - and nearly everyone takes rail/bus/train. Oahu has a population less than 1 million and most people still want to take their cars. We will not have the ridership nor can we afford this. Please stop this rail project now. It is going to be a 20 year nightmare which is not going to resolve our traffic problem. Thank you! Respectfully, Jim Anderson

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 12:56 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: joanne.amberg@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joanne Amberg	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Please do not saddle the tax payers with the wrong approach (rail) to our traffic problems. There are other solutions that will not require the constant bail outs from tax payers, and that will be more useful for our island transportation needs. Fixed rail is NOT the solution.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 10:13 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: joelflach@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joel Flach	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I strongly oppose HB134 and extending the GET. Rail seems to have increased costs and problems that will only grow. However, if it has to be funded I think it should be funded by an increase in gas taxes. Many states are turning to gas tax increases for revenue in light of the drop in gas prices. (<http://www.npr.org/2015/02/10/383789378/failing-bridges-taking-a-toll-some-states-move-to-raise-gas-tax>). People who are contributing to the traffic problems (ie drivers) should bear the brunt of the cost for traffic "solutions". Increased gas prices also encourage people to reduce consumption and bike, walk, car pool, take the bus, or ride a train instead. It's not fair that people already part of the solution (bikers, walkers, bus riders, etc.) should have to pay more for food and other necessities through an increased GET.

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HB134 Testimony

When the rail was proposed it was sold to the public as being self funding via the tax that was to sunset and create no debt when the project was completed in 2022. By extending the tax this means that we were not told the truth and that the planning was not complete. Many people argued that the numbers at the front end of the project were too low but again we were assured that the numbers were good and valid. Based on that, the project should not be given more money. The original statute was written very narrowly so that only if Oahu wanted the tax could it be sought after via the Honolulu City Council. Mayor Caldwell needs to handle the project with the funds that we were originally told would be needed and not change the rules of the game with only a small segment of the project completed. So, NO to extending the tax for the project.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 8:43 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: joe.carbone@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/1/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joseph Carbone	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Enough with the taxes already! Why throw good money after bad for this misconception? It will cater to few, cost way too much to maintain without raising taxes in the future, and will do little next to nothing to alleviate traffic congestion. Who can say how much this will actually cost the taxpayer? My guess, according to past ventures of the same ilk in other places, at least 2 1/2 times more than originally forecast. Stop it now and don't waste any more taxpayers money.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 3:06 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: keahi@lava.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Keahi Pelayo	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: This is only the beginning! This program was ill-conceived and it has always been clear that it cannot be afforded. Time to kill transit. Aloha, Keahi Pelayo

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 10:04 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: aeowynne@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Pilago	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Please CONSIDER allocating a lane just for CITY BUSES! This way people utilizing the bus will get to work or appointments on time. And it will encourage other people to use it. Improve the BEST BUS service in the nation, it WAS the best now I am not so sure, LOCAL people utilize the bus system EVERYDAY and that is who you should be looking at to SERVE, not just the tourists.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 7:03 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: margeneayers@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margene Ayers	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Enough squeezing of more tax dollars for a project that has been burning through millions of dollars with multi billions to go up in smoke without any benefit to the overburdened taxpayers. There will be no end to this money grab. Stop the rail now. Cut our losses now.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 12:33 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: marijane@mac.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marijane Holmes Carlos	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: When the rail was proposed it was sold to the public as being self funding via the tax that was to sunset and create no debt when the project was completed in 2022. By extending the tax this means that we were not told the truth. Many people argued that the numbers at the front end of the project were too low but again we were assured that the numbers were good and valid. Based on that, the project should not be given more money. The original statute was written very narrowly so that only if Oahu wanted the tax could it be extended after the project was pau, via the Honolulu City Council. Mayor Caldwell needs to handle the project with the funds that we were originally told would be needed. Even Mufi Hanniman has changed his stripes after lying profusely to the City Council and the voters. So, NO to extending the tax for the project

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 10:34 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: morrismcm@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM*

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melvin Morris	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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As I drive through Kailua each day I cannot help but to notice the many people who walk our streets as homeless and those that stand around either waving their arms or speaking to imaginary friends. Our State Legislature spends an astronomical amount of our money for Social Welfare. The Cato Institute reported a Single Mother of two can receive almost \$50,000 per year in benefits. This has to be one of the highest in the Nation. I see this all in Kailua which has one of the highest per capita incomes in all of Hawaii and I cannot imagine what I might see in other areas around Oahu. Is it worse? I figure it has got to be. In addition there are deplorable roads, declining infrastructure are all around us and those of us who choose to remain in Hawaii pay the highest taxes in the Nation. Why on earth are we progressing with the Rail? The Rail cannot be to the betterment of the majority when all around us there is so much decay and suffering. Is anyone listening? I pray they are.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 4:06 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: MSMatson@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michelle Matson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: STOP THE BLEEDING !!!! BURY THIS BILL !!!

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 2:09 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: culvyhouse@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/1/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
MJ Culvyhouse	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: We have thrown away enough money already. Our City will be bankrupt if the rail is not stopped, and our citizens hard-earned money is needed for existing problems with infrastructure. Stop This Insane Fiscal Fiasco - STIFF the rail.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 2:58 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: alohanan@me.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Nagamine	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Strongly opposed to this additional burdensome tax. It is regressive and hurts low income people the most. Before the legislature approves taxing the saddled already taxpayers, a full accounting of all rail money spent since 2007 is in order. I would also like a clear understanding of why the head of HART got a large bonus last year yet the project is so far over budget. Something is not right and I strongly urge the legislature to see a full accounting of every dollar spent so far including but not limited to public relations and advertising.

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TO: Members of the Committee on Finance

FROM: Natalie Iwasa
Honolulu, HI 96825
808-395-3233

HEARING: 3 p.m. Wednesday, March 4, 2015

SUBJECT: HB 134, County Surcharge Extension - **OPPOSED**

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 134, which would extend the county general excise surcharge tax in perpetuity. I oppose this measure.

The general excise tax and related **surcharge is regressive and hits low-income residents the hardest**. That means that a higher percentage of their already very-limited money goes to the tax. Many residents are struggling to get by paycheck to paycheck, and an extension of this tax will continue to make it hard for people to make ends meet.

Mayor Caldwell has stated several times that he supports this tax because 33% of it is paid for by visitors. It's important to note he is using an eight-year-old study that applies only to the statewide GET. In order to determine how much visitors contribute toward the GET and its related surcharge on Oahu, we should be looking at visitor expenditures on Oahu.

According to the 2013 data book for Hawaii, visitor expenditures on Oahu have been about 50% from 2007 - 2013. It stands to reason then, that the amount **visitors have contributed** to the surcharge is about 50% of the statewide number, or **about 16% - 17%**.

In addition, we were told over and over again that the surcharge would be temporary, that it would sunset at the end of 2022.

I urge you to vote "**NO**" on this tax extension.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 10:06 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: 1mu630@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nolan Moriwaki	Masons Union Local #1 Hawaii, IUBAC	Support	No

Comments: Local #1 SUPPORTS HB134 so that the construction can keep on going and keep everyone working for now and for the future expansion. Local #1 represents members from the following trades, Brick and Block Setters, Ceramic and Marble Setters, Stone Masons, and Pointer Caulkers we ask for your support for HB134 and any bill in relation to the Rail tax that will keep us working Mahalo

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 4:07 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: pwegesen@hawaii.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Pablo Wegesend	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Do not raise state tax to support rail. This is a City & County of Honolulu issue.

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Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 2:36 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: g3sea@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Paul Perretta	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I oppose HB 134 for the following reasons : 1. The Rail project was poorly planned and mismanaged and is an incredibly ugly blight on our Aina. 2. The Rail Project is a frightening \$1 Billion over budget at 1/20 th it's planned length. 3. Local families should NOT be penalized by higher taxes as a result of the gross mistakes and mismanagement made by the City Administration and HART. It would be far cheaper to stop it now than in the future and save the City, State and Local families the escalating and frightening Fiscal predictions of some \$8-\$10 Billion !

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 9:53 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: pearl@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM*

HB134

Submitted on: 3/1/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Pearl Hill	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 8:02 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: steve@scotthawaii.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Steve Scott	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: It would be irresponsible for the excise tax for the rail to be extended by the legislature without the city's and HART's expenditures being audited, and before the future costs for rail are made known to the public that is being asked to pay the bill. The public is tired of the bait and switch that has been going on since Mayor Hanneman, and the city does not deserve a blank check to build a rail system that can't support itself when operational, and will cost this state billions of dollars over the original budget.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, March 01, 2015 8:51 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: sonofjehiel@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/1/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stuart Novick	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I am unalterably opposed to extending the GET or any other state financial support for the rail. This is destroying not only our state's future stability but our faith in government. Too much false reassurance that is little more than guesses and bravado. Time to STOP! Stop, look, and listen. Then go back to the people with an intelligent plan. NO to GET extension.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 10:41 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: aloha.susan@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM*

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
susan cummings	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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TAXBILLSERVICE

126 Queen Street, Suite 304

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: MISCELLANEOUS, Extend county surcharge on state tax

BILL NUMBER: SB 19; HB 19; HB 134 (Identical)

INTRODUCED BY: SB by Nishihara, Harimoto and 1 Democrat; HB 19 by Saiki by request; HB 134 by Souki

BRIEF SUMMARY: Amends Act 247, SLH 2005, to make the county surcharge on state tax permanent.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval

STAFF COMMENTS: This bill relates to the 0.5% surcharge on the general excise tax that is currently imposed in the City and County of Honolulu. It is currently scheduled to sunset on December 31, 2022.

When the surcharge legislation was adopted back in 2006, taxpayers, especially those in Honolulu, were assured that the 0.5% surcharge was going to be temporary. The funds were supposed to be paid to build the system, and not go toward ordinary maintenance. It now appears that the rail project may have cost overruns, but the proponents of the bill are not asking for an extension of the tax to cover the overruns. Instead, they are asking to extend the tax from 2022 to ... forever. That is a very long time.

Contributing to the financial woes of the City and County is the fact that the state is siphoning 10% of all surcharge collections into the general fund. This diversion was supposed to represent payment to the state for the costs incurred in administering the surcharge. After all, the department of taxation collects and enforces the tax and just writes the county a check. But the amount diverted turns out to be a massive amount of money, almost as much as the entire operating budget of the department of taxation, and is obviously far in excess of the costs involved. We believe this diversion to be in violation of the constitutional principle called “intergovernmental tax immunity” – governments don’t tax each other – and is therefore invalid. If all or some of these unlawfully collected receipts go back to the City, the problems that the City is now complaining about will be easier to solve.

Above all, lawmakers should be aware that of all the taxes imposed in Hawaii, the general excise tax imposes a serious burden on businesses and individuals alike. It is not only regressive, taking a larger percentage of a poorer family’s budgets than a high income family’s budget, but it also takes its share off the top of a business’ income without regard to the profitability of that business.

The bottom line is the same across the board. It is not a matter of not having enough revenue as it is the unwillingness of elected officials to tighten the counties’ or the state’s purse strings in bringing expenditures into line with resources and setting priorities for what resources are already available. Instead of doing the fiscally responsible thing, the easiest response is to just raise more taxes as evidenced by this measure.

Digested 2/10/15

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 03, 2015 7:56 AM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: welch@pixi.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/3/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Thomas Welch	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: The entire project needs to be stopped as it has been one lie after another and we do not want the RAIL on our island at all but prefer a BUS system or countraaflo lanes A.M. & P.M.

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I am a member of the citizen group, TimeOut! Honolulu and am **most strongly opposed** to any change to the Honolulu rail project GET amount or expiration date until the City and HART have provided the State Legislature with sufficient and reliable data that allows you to make an informed decision based on a fair cost benefit analysis of what is best for the **citizens**, not for the developers, unions or banks.

As you are fully aware, the GET is an extremely regressive tax, placing the heaviest burden on our fellow citizens with the lowest incomes. Increases should never be considered or approved without extensive due diligence on The Legislature's part.

Therefore, I respectfully ask that you seek accountability and transparency from the City and HART on the following;

1. An annual audit of all rail moneys spent from 2007 through 2014.
2. Contractor bids on the remaining 10 miles of the project so the overall cost of the project is clearer.
3. A rigorous, objective assesement and clear statement of the project's impact on traffic congestion, including the unfortunate Ho'opili development that will add so much congestion while destroying our best agriculture land that is much needed for sustainability.
4. A rigorous, objective assessment of the impact rail will have on our fine bus system, with thousands of bus riders daily transferring to rail, its budget pinched and routes cancelled.
5. A rigorous, objective assessment of the rail ridership projections, including the number of new residents needed in the TOD areas to meet the rail ridership projections.
6. A rigorous, objective analysis of less expensive but very viable alternatives, such as bus rapid transit on managed lanes, Pearl Harbor bridge/tunnel, etc

Please, do not be stampeded into making the situation worse by accepting the thin and manipulative claims of impending bankruptcy by the City and HART. Experience tells us their projections are at best unreliable, and at worst they are purposefully evasive, incomplete, overly optimistic and possibly outright lies.

Defer action on these bills, take a TimeOut! for the next year and complete the proper reviews, giving the City and HART and most importantly we, the citizens, time to make their cases and to consider responsible alternatives.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Torreano
Waikiki

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 3:57 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: tomor@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM*

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
tom moore	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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Testimony HB 134
Troy Seffrood

No!

I have been following the public transportation arguments for many years now. I went to one of the original public meetings produced by the Hanneman mayoral administration.

Back then my family and I voted for it. But now the rail does not go to the places promised (does not go to UH Manoa!) and is at least twice as much as the original price tag.

I find the Mayor's promise of "on budget and on time" to be very questionable. I find HART's promise of "transparency" an outright lie.

They are lying to the tune of billions and billions of dollars. Imagine the late Carl Sagan saying this—it is astronomical.

I am very much for public transportation, but I unequivocally oppose the rail as it now stands with no oversight of our dear tax dollars.

I vote, and I talk politics with my friends, neighbors, and acquaintances.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 1:35 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: yanom@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eloise M. Yano	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: STRONG OPPOSITION

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Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 3:14 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: lgard@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lila Gardner	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Regarding this bill-- I strongly oppose the extension of the GET tax to support the rail project which will bankrupt this state--- what then? Do not extend any tax to support rail --Lila Gardner, Makiki

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finance1-Kim

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 1:42 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: mygarcia1@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM*

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Garcia	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 1:16 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: patmeyers@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
PAT Meyers	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: THIS HART WILL BANKRUPT HONOLULU-

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 2:05 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: patriciacarroll@sprynet.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Carroll	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: We pay enough in taxes now. Lawmakers need to be more careful in how they spend our money. We are not automatic teller machines! Lawmakers need to spend wisely the money they have now before asking for more.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 1:16 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: rfl208@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB134 on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM

HB134

Submitted on: 3/2/2015

Testimony for FIN on Mar 4, 2015 15:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Randy Leong	TimeOutHonolulu	Oppose	No

Comments: I strongly oppose HB134 and any bill for extension of the Rail Tax. A house of cards has been building with each card imposing massive debt or taxes on the residents of Honolulu. Giving HART and the City an extension of the Rail Tax would be like handing them an unlimited number of cards which they can add to the already shaky house of cards anytime they run into more cost overruns for Rail, which they surely will. I'm sure you, the members of this committee, would not want your name associated with the crashing of the house of cards. By handing HART and the City these unlimited number of cards, which they'll surely use as the cost overruns for Rail continue to mount, will certainly put you and your good name at risk. Don't do it.

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Aloha House Finance committee members:

Just a brief note to add my voice of opposition to the Rail project as configured and mismanaged, and to extending the excise tax as a means of perpetuating this folly.

The core of my opposition, to which I testified five years ago, that as designed it is a blight on the landscape: "It will be ugly as hell." And it is becoming so.

Second, cost will never be known until engineering is completed, and the likelihood of unforeseen cost spirals upward as construction moves from countryside to the city. It is for this reason that the original cost estimate has more than doubled and will climb much higher.

The possibility of a good, useful transit project was doomed by the manipulative decision to start in the abandoned sugar cane field of Ewa and attempt a "done deal" or fait accompli before getting to the hard part.

If the project had started in the area of greatest need, the city, and worked outward, it would have resulted in a more appropriate, low-impact design and an incremental usefulness to riders. Possibly it could have attracted political buy-in as it expanded. If the project stalled, at least it would have a useful first leg.

Public support was never adequate to the challenge of such a big project, and public support now seems to decline by the day. If you fund this process, you may end up with a rail that runs from Ewa to Waimalu.

The cost of going on blindly will much exceed the City-inflated cost of stopping.

Tom Coffman